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ABSTRACT

In response to the National Commission on Excellence in Education's Report, "A Nation at Risk," the Department of Education's Center for Libraries and Education Improvement, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, invited leaders in the library and information science community to a meeting in September 1983 to help launch a project to be known as "Libraries and the Learning Society." Four seminars, held in different United States cities, examined how public libraries, academic libraries, library and information science training institutions, and school library media centers could best respond to "A Nation at Risk." The fifth seminar dealt with ways in which libraries should come together to link their resources to help create a Learning Society. Based upon seminar participant responses to issue papers, 13 recommendations were identified, concerning: (1) teaching of effective use of information resources in elementary and secondary schools; (2) high quality library services and resources for all elementary and secondary schools; (3) more vigorous and measurable standards for school library media services; (4) open libraries for students and area residents; (5) library collections to inform librarians and educators about recent developments in their respective fields; (6) a broad general education for future school media specialists; (7) competitive salaries for media specialists; (8) school administrator and teacher candidates' knowledge about the role of a media center; (9) providing a versatile, resourceful advisory service in all libraries; (10) library activity in adult literacy education programs; (11) assessment of libraries' ability to respond to proposals for excellence in education and lifelong learning; (12) development of plans by libraries to share their resources; and (13) reform and refinement of recruitment, preparation, and continuing education of librarians and information scientists. (JMK)

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Alliance For Excellence

Librarians Respond to A Nation at Risk

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
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United States Department of Education
1984

SP 024 901

Alliance For Excellence

Librarians Respond to A Nation at Risk

Recommendations and Strategies
from
Libraries and the Learning Society

U.S. Department of Education
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July, 1984

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Alliance For Excellence

Throughout the winter of 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education drew together a sobering statement. America, it concluded, had let its formal education deteriorate to a dangerous degree. Because of this, the Commission warned—and its uncompromising point of view was both the essential theme and the title of its final report—ours was *A Nation at Risk*.

The dilemma examined in that document is doubly unfortunate because of the timing. We are still becoming accustomed to the Information Age. It obliges us to pick our way through a thicket of messages unlike anything we've run into before; and gray issues compete incessantly for our attention. Rational decisions are demanded of us—or at least an understanding of what is going on all around, from the stillness of the ionosphere above, to the restless regions beneath the earth's geologic faults.

To assure survival in this difficult age, there is a need to elevate the United States to the standard of a lifelong Learning Society. Schooling must be more demanding because so much more is being demanded of us—as adults, parents, employees, citizens, voters, and consumers.

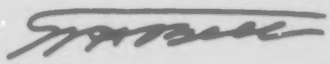
Somehow, families must hear this message. Somehow, they must be led to accept the urgency of

One could not help but be impressed by the response of the nation's library and information science community to the challenge of A Nation at Risk. *Their recommendations for the alliance of home, school, and library are essential to our attainment of excellence in education and a Learning Society.*

creating a Learning Society and, to that end, supporting with energy the tough recommendations of *A Nation at Risk*.

The challenge before us is of such magnitude, though, that school and family will be a match for it only when they forge a grand alliance with a third institution—the library. The justification for that comes out of a century-old tradition: in 100,000 settings, rural and urban, majestic and modest, a librarian not only holds the keys to the knowledge that is the prelude to tomorrow but also is equipped to show *every* citizen how to access the future and live with confidence in the Learning Society.

One could not help but be impressed by the response of the nation's library and information science community to the challenge of *A Nation at Risk*. Their recommendations for the alliance of home, school, and library are essential to our attainment of excellence in education and a Learning Society.



T. H. Bell
U.S. Secretary of Education
July, 1984

Preface

In response to the National Commission on Excellence in Education's report, *A Nation at Risk*, the Department of Education's Center for Libraries and Education Improvement, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, invited leaders in the library and information science community to a meeting in September, 1983, to help launch a project to be known as "Libraries and a Learning Society."

This group of outstanding professionals, which became the Advisory Board for the project, considered the issues raised by *A Nation at Risk* and framed the questions to be asked of the library community. They thereupon set about to help organize a process whereby librarians and educators could come together to deal with the recommendations contained in the Commission's report and to formulate their own set of recommendations as to how they and their colleagues could best meet the challenges laid out in the report.

A series of five seminars was developed to examine specifically how public libraries, academic libraries, library and information science training institutions, and school library media centers could best respond to *A Nation at Risk*. The fifth seminar dealt with the ways in which libraries should come together to link their resources to help create a Learning Society.

The participants at the seminars were armed with a set of issue papers written by a distinguished group of authors. These papers were designed to help provoke thinking, promote lively debate, and to set forth to their colleagues in the library and information science community a series of recommendations intended to make the library and its staff stronger allies of American education. The Advisory Board met to review the deliberations and recommendations of the five seminars. This process led to the present report and the recommendations which follow.

A popular government without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a Farce or a Tragedy; or, perhaps both. Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which Knowledge gives.

The Writings of James Madison
Volume 9, p. 103, (Putnam, 1900—10)

Libraries and the Learning Society

The Information Age has swept around the world like a poorly forecast winter storm; its swirling blizzard of facts, figures, and data has been as bewildering as it has been challenging. This is the nature of the Information Age, but unlike the snows of February, it is here to stay. The necessity is for all of us to become acclimatized to it.

Much has happened since World War II to create this new era. The transistor has flipped electronics upside down, scientists have deftly rearranged genes, and human hearts have been transplanted. Americans bounded across the moon, and a laser beam from earth, 238,000 miles away, hit a target they left behind. As for the computer, fifth-generation models with artificial intelligence will soon be a reality.

Innovations such as these and so many more have churned up a tidal wave of new findings for us to absorb and master. Trying to stay afloat, the publishing industry has turned out more and more books—from 15,000 titles published in 1959, the mass grew to about 50,000 titles in 1983.

But this is only a part of what it is like to live in the Information Age. Satellites and TV have collapsed our horizons. In an instant we are spectators of World Cup Soccer, or Winter and Summer Olympics; the

next moment, we watch soldiers thousands of miles away probing broken buildings for bodies crushed in a terrorist attack. We live, in fact, in a global village, neighbors to all humanity.

As never before, issues pile up, spawned by awesome technology or by political and social ferment in every corner of the earth. These are issues without easy answers, and some of them may affect human survival. So, they have to be understood; decisions must be made about them. To be responsible, rational citizens in this new time, we must chart a stable persistent course through the waves of clues, tidbits, hard facts, and rumors.

This can be done, as *A Nation at Risk* eloquently urged, if we move aggressively to create a Learning Society. To do so calls for forming an alliance among teachers, education administrators, parents and other citizens, and the nation's librarians. Through their united efforts, these men and women will be able to provide interrelated, lifelong educational experiences for people of all ages and in all walks of life. Only through this joint activity can a workable Learning Society be realized.

This is where the library comes in whatever its type (school, public, special, or academic): it can and should play a full role in this process. It is an institution with extraordinary capacities. In it you will discover new ways of learning, find out how to plan an adventure into education, and then ascend to new levels of knowledge and understanding. The finest of libraries, you will discover, often are one-stop learning centers, the best buy you may ever have for your tax dollar.

Books and periodicals will continue to be vital resources in your learning activities at the library. But increasingly you will find the most modern informational and educational tools there. The computer, microfilm, and even the videocassette recorder and videodisc are being harnessed by librarians. Individuals can and do learn directly through these

devices, which also handle administrative tasks, operate efficient links with other libraries both near and far, and store information.

So, the library is a place where you will be able to learn by yourself at your own time and pace. Others benefit there from one-on-one instruction in reading, computation, basic study skills, or research.

The reality is that learning services are already available to people of any age at libraries from Alaska, to Maine, to Texas, north and south, east and west, and to the outlying U.S. territories. The preschooler can be readied for school at the public library; boys and girls pursue classroom assignments in their school library media center; the college student rounds out an independent paper at the college/university library on campus; professionals verify facts and challenge assumptions in medical, law, business, or other special libraries; the adult voter, consumer, parent-to-be, taxpayer, or curious citizen can learn at the public library.

Meanwhile, the senior citizen can find many resources at the library to enrich the more quiet years. Typically, a library in New York State, responding to requests, organized workshops on sign language and genealogy. In Pierce County, near Tacoma, Washington, librarians sponsored writing-discussion groups for people between their mid-50s and 90s; 20 groups learned creative writing, then applied it in completing 120 different autobiographies.

One individual who has found library service of great value through seven decades has been Nobel Prize-winner Dr. Glenn Seaborg, a member of the National Commission on Excellence in Education. He fondly recalls growing up with libraries in Ishpeming, Michigan: "I remember going to the public library walking between snowdrifts over my head to get my favorite books before others found them." As a scientist of 72, he remains "absolutely dependent" on the library to "provide me with access to the wide range

of scientific journals which I must read to keep informed of advances in my field."

Libraries have been advancing in their range of services. No longer are you limited to the information resources in your town. Entire networks have been created so that one institution can call in materials from others in distant places. It has become routine for the library to belong to state, regional, and national systems; as a result, sharing is second nature for most librarians. A detailed book on the Colorado River Indian tribes might not exist in your community, but it will be on a shelf somewhere else. Through interlibrary loan, systems can make your library as big as the entire country. Wherever you are, the information of the nation can be brought to you.

Sustained by alliances among educators, parents, other citizens and librarians, such a Learning Society can be developed and nurtured. Well-designed and well-maintained, this alliance will assure us that the whole will indeed be greater than the sum of its parts. A Learning Society offers unprecedented benefits to every individual.

Clearly, then, your library can be of real service in education at many levels. Clearly, too, it must have a full partnership in the Learning Society that will have to be brought to life if we are to be competent, knowledgeable citizens in the Information Age. Sustained by alliances among educators, parents, other citizens, and librarians, such a Learning Society can be developed and nurtured. Well-designed and well-maintained, this alliance will assure us that the whole will indeed be greater than the sum of its parts. A Learning Society offers unprecedented benefits to every individual.

To achieve their potential, libraries will have to be perceived in a new way. They must be accepted as an integral part of the overall education system in your community; the librarian must be considered an educator as well as a librarian. And your interest in libraries should be just as strong as your commitment to your local schools.

But to justify your commitment and support, library service in your community will have to be raised to the highest level of quality that community resources and energies can generate. To this end, and in response to *A Nation at Risk*, librarians, teachers, and others from across the nation have been

deliberating. This report reflects their thinking and their priorities for achieving improved service in the American library.

On the pages that follow, you will find road signs for realizing what Dr. Elizabeth Stone, former president of the American Library Association, has called a "sound and persuasive vision of what the library of the near future can and should be." It is the report's view that an assessment of the nation's libraries should be conducted to determine their readiness to fulfill the vision of an "Alliance for Excellence."

These pages assert that in the Learning Society ahead, the library must play a central role as a learning center staffed with user-oriented professionals.

These pages assert that in the Learning Society ahead, the library must play a central role as a learning center staffed with user-oriented professionals. Libraries everywhere—all types—should share their resources. Further, as the next chapter develops, each school must have quality service of a high standard in its school library media center.

This report states with conviction that the library can be pivotal in the education renewal recommended so effectively by *A Nation at Risk*, a process intended to create an enduring Learning Society. Libraries cannot be tied to the past. Rather, libraries, newly energized, freshly chartered, can become centers of the Learning Society. This report details fresh directions for the library community which can benefit every citizen.

Libraries in Support of Education

The case for education renewal was stated in sobering, straightforward terms in April 1983 by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. Its report, *A Nation at Risk*, took a message of concern into every state of the union. The recommendations in this message challenged educators, families, and students to undertake stringent measures for change. America's well-being, the report warned, is at stake.

The libraries of the nation can and should be part of the remedy. To ensure that the changes proposed will be effective, these institutions must join with educators, parents, and other citizens in a grand alliance; each should share the burdens of a task larger than any one of them can bear alone.

In briefest terms, the time is now for libraries to achieve larger prominence as integral forces in the education of the nation's residents. Participants in the Department of Education's intensive review of the role of libraries in a Learning Society determined that libraries can relate most directly to four aspects of the National Commission's charter for education renewal. These four have to do with:

Content The National Commission urged that high school graduation requirements be strengthened. At a minimum, students should

have to take four years of English, three of mathematics, three of science, three of social sciences, and one-half year of computer science. A two-year exposure to a foreign language was proposed for students planning to go to college.

Standards *A Nation at Risk* recommended that "more vigorous and measurable standards" be instituted by schools, colleges, and universities. Four-year colleges and universities should raise admission requirements to "help students do their best educationally with challenging materials . . ."

Time The Commission favored assigning "significantly more time" to learning what it called the "New Basics." This would necessitate better use of the school day, a longer school day, or "a lengthened school year."

Teaching It was the National Commission's intent to improve preparation of teachers and make teaching "a more rewarding and respected profession." Remedial measures should include higher salaries for teachers, putting them on 11-month contracts, and providing incentives to attract top students to the profession.

The time is now for libraries to achieve larger prominence as integral forces in the education of the nation's residents.

It was clear to the participants in the review of the role of libraries in a Learning Society that of all libraries, the ones which could most readily support these recommendations would be the 88,000 public and private school library media centers. To a lesser extent, other libraries could contribute too—the 15,000 central and branch public libraries, the 3,300 academic and research institutions associated with colleges and universities, and the 10,000 special information resource centers active in such fields as law, medicine, religion, and business.

To Strengthen Content

About 40 years ago, the school library was simply the room with the books. It was run much like a public library which happened to be in a school. Student use of the library most often tended to be voluntary, their book quests largely recreational. On the whole, this room was a neutral, under-utilized area.

Today, that has mostly changed. The room is now called the *school library media center*; staff members prefer that designation to school library and favor calling themselves library media specialists. These new titles reflect the increasing weight of technology in learning and the expansion of the library's function beyond its traditional role.

Today, too, the library media specialist has stepped closer to the school's mission of teaching than was the case 25 years ago. In most states, this individual is certified as a teacher and is seen as akin to special teachers of art, music, or physical education.

In labelling this special room a "center," administrators seem to acknowledge tacitly the place of the library as a component part of learning at the school. Because of the phenomenal explosion of knowledge, because of the value given increasingly to resources other than books, because of the stern necessity for students to learn how to find and apply information, the library media center *should* become a magnet for teacher and student alike. The professional in charge may well join teachers in designing curriculum and selecting materials, or enter the classroom to work on students' listening, viewing, and analytical skills.

This is the ideal. In reality, the past few years have not been encouraging for the library media center; budget cuts and other claims on resources have hit *all* areas, but school library media programs have been deeply hurt. As it stands, 15 percent of our public schools have *no* library media center; almost

three million public school students attend schools with *no* library media center. Not far from the District of Columbia, 55 elementary school library media specialists in one county were released in 1982 due to budget shrinkage. In a major New England city, no elementary school library media center has a professional in charge; aides, technicians, or volunteers handle the work.

Along with an erosion in qualified personnel, there is confusion among some teachers and administrators on what the library media center is able to do, or *should* be able to do, to bolster educational activity. "Just check out the book" is no longer an adequate charge to a student. The library media center is designed to do much more. School library media centers frequently give elementary school children their first experiences with information resources and shape the student's lifetime use of libraries and information. Hence, school library media programs of the best quality directly help students to take their place in the Learning Society.

Because of the phenomenal explosion of knowledge, because of the value given increasingly to resources other than books, because of the stern necessity for students to learn how to find and apply information, the library media center should become a magnet for teacher and student alike.

However, the school library center can be fully effective only if students know how to find, evaluate, and use the information stored there. This is a basic skill which *all* must acquire to function responsibly in a democratic society where more and more information is being harvested each year.

There is a peremptory need in schools, then, for special, ongoing instruction in information finding and utilization skills. Some school systems take this seriously. A number have written detailed instructional objectives for teaching these skills. By third grade, a student is to have mastered the different functions of a book's index and table of contents; by fifth grade, students are to understand how to read maps and use atlases; by sixth grade, they are to know how to verify a statement as a fact using more than one source, and so on. Students in *all* grades face information functions which they must learn at one point or another.

Practices such as these are the exception. In too many schools, the teaching of these skills is uneven, inadequate, and sporadic. Very often no effort is made to integrate the instruction with the curriculum, and especially with teaching of the New Basics stressed by *A Nation at Risk*. Along with this deficit, the textbook dominates instruction in any number of schools. Children, many educators seem to feel, will learn from a textbook just as their parents did. They assume that whatever the text says is accurate, and that there is no reason to motivate inquiry and promote the use of many other sources of information.

There is a force at hand and available in our schools which can and must form the backbone for reform and improvement. The school's library media center can be the place where learning for the twenty-first century occurs.

Yet, as the National Commission on Excellence in Education so strongly warned, America's future is being eroded by the educational system of the present. In the process of national renewal already underway, the school library media center can be a versatile, relevant, hardworking partner. Dr. James Thompson, the American Association of School Librarian's Administrator of the Year for 1983, has testified to this with conviction:

> There is a force at hand and available in our schools which can and must form the backbone for reform and improvement. The school's library media center can be the place where learning for the twenty-first century occurs. (We) know of the tremendous power of the integration of the library media program with the school's instructional efforts.

Our children must learn how to draw confidently on the school library media center's resources and transfer these skills to other sources of information. By knowing how to find, analyze, and use information today, they certify their readiness to become reasoning, thoughtful adults tomorrow as citizens of the Information Age.

Recommendation A

We recommend that the elementary and secondary school curriculum be strengthened by teaching the effective use of information resources, including libraries. Further:

(1) Students should spend time in the school library media center to learn and practice information skills coordinated with class work;

(2) Students should be tested for competency in information skills in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and computer science;

(3) Students in grades one through twelve should have guided reading, listening, and viewing experiences, for pleasure and fulfillment as well as for information and knowledge, to acquire skill and abiding interest in learning.

Certain changes must occur if this recommendation is to become a reality. Of primary importance, instruction in the New Basics, as well as all other subjects covered in elementary and secondary school, should include teaching the effective use of information resources *keyed directly to those specific subjects.* Information-finding skills should be applied, with the aim of individual mastery, through a series of class assignments. Ideally, teachers and school library media center specialists should join in planning the curriculum, taking into account the actual information resources available throughout the community.

In every school, curriculum planning should have each class spend time in the school library media center. There, students would be expected to practice their skills in relation to curriculum content and reinforce information concepts learned in class.

Just as schools will assess competencies in the New Basics and other subjects, so should they make it routine to measure achievements of students in information skills. Library and education organizations should work with national testing organizations to

create means of testing information-finding and utilization skills. As field use might dictate, these methods of assessment should be revised, updated, and improved.

Just as schools will assess competencies in the New Basics and other subjects, so should they make it routine to measure achievements of students in information skills.

In their computer science instruction, all students should learn how to use data bases to extend dramatically their search for information. Library and education organizations should work with vendors to help develop data bases appropriate for children.

Textbooks in the New Basics and other subjects should echo the broadening of information-seeking instruction. The texts should include concepts and possible assignments that have to do with the integration of information.

The recent reports on education have focused on reading skills, sometimes at the risk of discouraging reading for pleasure. Schools use books in the instructional process, but may neglect to encourage students to read widely for pleasure. *A Nation at Risk* reminds us that students look to parents and teachers as models of intellectual and moral integrity. Reading programs in schools, as well as teachers, should stress and show by example that reading for pleasure as well as for study is a top priority. Parents should emphasize it at home. The more students see parents and teachers committed to reading, the more students will read. And the more they do, the better they will read. The alliance of home, school, and library can help move students toward the final reward: developing the lifetime reading habit.

Finally, for the newly altered curriculum to be supported in a meaningful way, schools must have school library media centers of the highest possible quality consistent with recommended national and state professional standards.

Recommendation B

We recommend that every elementary and secondary school have quality library services and resources.

Achieving quality in the school library media center will involve agencies and organizations at local, state, and national levels. But the call for excellent school library media programs could be expected to come most appropriately from the local community itself.

In that community, it is the responsibility of the school board to provide excellence in every school library media program in its jurisdiction. At the state level, depending on the exact circumstances, the state education agency, state library agency, or state legislature should mandate excellence in each school library media center, and the particular state body in charge should decide how to define quality in the light of conditions in that state. It should be that agency's task, as well, to plan strategies and incentives to make certain that the highest quality will be achieved.

Nationally, education and library associations should join with Federal agencies in endorsing this recommendation as their policy, then work cooperatively to fix strategies to assure that the goal will be realized. The American Association of School Librarians, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National Parent-Teachers Association typify the organizations that should be engaged in this effort.

To Raise Standards and Expectations

The matter of educational standards evoked concern in *A Nation at Risk*. The facts led it to one conclusion: standards have not kept pace with the demands of the day, and students are not being adequately chal-

lenged. This has turned into an all-too-corrosive deficiency.

This same deficiency applies to the current condition of the school library media center. One would expect the central resource facility of the school to provide a wide variety of up-to-date, relevant learning materials fully complementary to and supportive of the current emphasis on the New Basics. Yet, the sad fact is that far too many elementary and secondary schools are lacking in this regard.

Why is this? In good measure it is because of twin adverse forces: budget cuts and inflation.

From the 1970's on, school administrators have had to pare their budgets with regularity. In-class instruction has been largely sacrosanct; therefore, reductions have been ordered in special programs, personnel other than classroom teachers, and the purchase of materials. Charting one facet of these cuts, the Education Products Information Exchange has found that between 1974 and 1982-83, expenditures for library books went up by just 36 cents per student. Persistent inflation turned that minimal rise into a *de facto* reduction in purchases.

As a rule school library media centers do not have large holdings. The National Center for Education Statistics determined, through research done in 1978, that almost one-half of all elementary and secondary school library media centers have 5,000 to 9,999 volumes apiece; the average holding per student was just over 13 volumes. Because books used frequently by students wear out with regularity, the collections of the school library media center are in increasing jeopardy; inventories have been shrinking, and what remains may be bordering on the obsolete. Many schools have cut back on top quality magazines for their library media centers—magazines with solid intellectual content which numbers of students would not see at home. Further, schools must come to terms with electronic storage and delivery of information and with new and sophisticated forms of software.

This withdrawal from a position of quality comes in an era when American publishing is doubling its titles every 22 years, a phenomenon that has long outdistanced the schools and their libraries.

At the same time, there have also been alarming declines in the ranks of qualified personnel staffing library media centers. Again, budget cutting has been to blame. Assessing this situation, the American Association of School Librarians has estimated that there has been an erosion of 10 percent in media center professionals since their somewhat better times in the 1960's.

Over the years, organizations have seen the wisdom of stipulating standards for school library media programs. Laying out policies for school library services in 1961, the Council of Chief State School Officers wrote 19 pages of guidelines in its landmark document, *Responsibilities of State Departments of Education for School Library Service*. This pamphlet concluded that "The achievement of excellence in school library services should constitute one of the major objectives of state school systems." In recent times, however, the Council has focused on other priorities.

Two other national organizations, the American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, jointly published updated standards for library media programs in 1975. Specialists have since decided that standards for this school service should be performance-based and founded on clear, solid research; refined in this way, guidelines could help reverse the downturn in effectiveness of too many library media centers. The American Association of School Libraries and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology already have plans to rewrite the 1975 standards. Organizations and agencies concerned with public and academic libraries should review their standards for effective statements regarding the services these libraries might give to elementary and secondary school students.

Recommendation C

We recommend that libraries, associations, state educational and library agencies, and accrediting organizations adopt more rigorous and measurable standards for school library media services.

Before completing new standards, agencies and organizations should seek the advice of all those who may be directly or indirectly involved in the activities of the school library media center: state education and library agency staff; school administrators; teachers; specialists in library media services, curriculum, subject matter, and evaluation; and citizens. School library media researcher David Loertscher has noted: "Standards for a profession such as ours should be the best statement of our collective judgment—a clear and unequivocal vision of what a library media program should be."

Constructed from substantial current research, these standards should be performance-based and measurable. They should apply to library media programs in both elementary and secondary schools.

To Improve the Uses of Time

More time at the task of learning: *A Nation at Risk* was unequivocal in calling for this change as a foundation stone of our educational renewal. More time may mean a longer school day or longer school year, as well as more effective use of the time spent in school. One way or another, the school must compensate for the greater output demanded of the student, with today's heavier accent on the New Basics.

To the extent that it is a genuine learning space, the school library media center should be treated equally with other areas in the instructional program. If the school is to remain open longer, school officials should arrange for the library media center to be open longer.

As it is, library media services often are *only* available during the school day and a few minutes before and after classes. A student who needs materials from the center has to get them during school hours, or not at all, because that room is frequently closed before and after school, and almost always is closed in the evenings and on weekends.

Nor does the center operate during vacation periods when school is not in session. This is doubly regrettable because summer reading *can* be effective. In her *Summer Learning and the Effects of Schooling*, Barbara Heyns wrote of large-scale research showing that "The single summer activity that is most strongly and consistently related to summer learning is reading...(It) systematically increases the vocabulary test scores of children." This, of course, urges the summer availability of libraries.

Even if the library media center were open after school, students who depend on bus transportation could scarcely benefit. As most schedules dictate, they must be ready to board their buses within moments after school's closing, or lose their ride. Arrangements are often made for students to stay for athletics or band practice; why can't these same provisions be made for information-seekers?

What can be done to give learners more options? Improving access to libraries calls for community-wide planning to respond to needs of students and others. Schedules and policies at school, public, and academic libraries could be altered to allow greater use of those facilities by students and the community at large.

Further, collaboration between *all* these institutions—school, public, and academic libraries—may be essential to counter higher costs. Only by agreeing to share resources and coordinate schedules can the various libraries of a community encourage and support the intellectual growth of all residents.

Improving access to libraries calls for community-wide planning to react to needs of students and others. Schedules and policies at school, public, and academic libraries could be altered to allow greater use of those facilities by students and the community at large.

Recommendation D

We recommend that school library media centers and public and academic libraries be open, to the fullest extent possible, to elementary and secondary school students and area residents. This policy would have the joint aims of expanding the time available for learning, while making more effective use of a community's library and information resources.

Local conditions must control when the school library media center will be open. In any instance, the goal should be to allow the most extensive use of the library media center's collections and services. And in cases where a community has no other library, that is all the more reason for seeing to it that the school library media center stays open in the evenings, on weekends, and in the summer.

Communities with limited public library resources and in which the school's library media center closes in summer should consider this option: learning resources used at the local school could be sent to the public library for temporary lending during summer vacation.

Such arrangements and the scheduling of hours should be planned by a community council representing all the libraries in the local area. The prime objective of its members should be to make tools of learning available to everyone in the community—children, students, and residents—under the most favorable circumstances attainable.

To Improve Teaching And Learning Through Improved School Library Media Programs

In all quality library programs, a commitment to service is a tenet held high in the librarian's creed. In no setting is it more strongly avowed than in the school library media center.

In this special room, the professional on duty must be prepared to listen, advise, guide, and inform. Who discovered America other than Columbus and the Vikings? Can you help us design a computer data base of Spanish vocabulary that we can call back by English or Spanish? Library media staff must respond calmly to a multitude of questions, must be equipped to shepherd inquiring minds toward data on anything from the workings of robotics in space to how Shakespeare transformed the wooden O of the Globe into the swelling scene at Agincourt.

At the same time, the library media specialist in today's school must also be ready to work with teachers on curriculum design by providing the best in current materials, and team-teaching information skills. It is a tall order, one made taller by the impact on curriculum of the information flood. In a way, this professional must be a 20th-century Renaissance person.

More than anything else, the times have caused a reformation in the prototype of what used to be the quiet school library. But for every school library media center which has caught up with the 1980's, a good 100 have stayed behind. They have suffered chiefly from being misunderstood and undervalued by the community's decision makers. School board members, administrators, teachers, and school-watchers among the citizenry have often had little if any experience with a dynamic library media center as youngsters, so

they underrate it. Hence, it fails to get the dollars essential for an operation which should figure much more prominently in the whole education process.

Preparation of teachers and administrators could reverse this lack of understanding, but this seldom happens; any course work about the contemporary school library media center is perfunctory, at best. Add to that the fact that administrators and teachers already at work often have had minimal or poor experiences with library media centers. Or their schools have only had meager library media resources. Or they never received much help from the professionals in the media center. It has not eased matters that library media center staff have sometimes been, by personal style and under the weight of tradition, somewhat withdrawn and inclined to wait for requests to come in, rather than acting aggressively to scout for potential users.

The full school organization and the community must be brought to a better understanding of the teaching and learning functions of the school library media center; this should be amplified by far larger exposure to the concept of this center in schools of education.

The sum of these factors often reveals a library media center hardly more potent than the old school library. If a passive posture ever was appropriate, it certainly is not in a time of urgent education renewal, when all available hands must resolutely pull together. The full school organization and the community must be brought to a better understanding of the teaching and learning functions of the school library media center; this should be amplified by far larger exposure to the concept of this center in schools of education. Meanwhile, efforts must be made to enhance the job of the school library media specialist, so that a new breed of thoroughly qualified, forward looking, outgoing candidates can be attracted to the profession.

Recommendation E

We recommend that school library media centers and public and academic libraries develop the collections needed to inform educators and librarians about developments in education and

the library and information science field, and about new or expanded professional concepts and practices in those fields.

Educators and librarians cannot ignore the changes that are taking place in society, education, and library and information science. There is no return to a time when a few professional books and journals could answer the questions that arise daily. Educators and librarians must have ready access to the latest research, innovations, and developments in their fields. While some school districts and public libraries have good professional collections, the array of books, journals, reports, and data bases needed are beyond the fiscal reach of individual schools and school systems.

Major research and academic libraries can share productively in improving access to the needed resources. Those libraries with large, high-quality collections in education and library and information science should form a consortium. Its aim: to make sure that teachers and library and information specialists have easy access to all resources that can inform them about the latest products, information, and research in their two fields.

Other steps must be taken if school library media programs are to win their proper place in the mainstream of education attuned for tomorrow. The process of transformation should begin with changes in the academic program of school library media specialist students.

Recommendation F

We recommend that candidates for the position of school library media specialist receive a broad general education that is geared to meet the challenge of the Information Age.

These future school library media specialists should develop competence in the New Basics, while being prepared both in education and in library and information science. Any latent aptitudes they may have for working with teachers and all types of students should be strengthened. And, further, they must come to know learning theory and the subtleties of human development, as well as information handling.

Recommendation G

We recommend that school library media specialists be offered professionally competitive salaries and working conditions that are rewarding and satisfying.

Full attention must be given to making the career of a school library media specialist more attractive. Up to this time, the salaries for this field have not been competitive. Not yet regarded as a dynamic partner in the newly esteemed information-flow process, new librarians—with a Master of Library Science degree—commanded in 1983 a starting salary in the range of slightly over $17,000 a year. In contrast, engineers with simply an undergraduate degree average $25,000 and can start as high as $40,000.

Recommendation H

We recommend that candidates for teacher or school administrator receive meaningful instruction in the role and activity of a school library media center.

While it is of great importance for school library media specialists to be educated for a new era, it is just as critical for teachers and school administrators to learn what can happen in a fine school library media center, where excellence is the rule, rather than the exception.

To accomplish this change, the curricula of schools of education will have to be broadened. National and state library organizations, along with state education and library agencies, should combine forces to accomplish this aim, working with the accrediting agencies and those institutions which have teacher education programs.

In due course, schools of education offering this new emphasis on information uses should be formally assessed on several grounds. How well does the school administrator trained in this environment interpret the school library media program to teachers, parents, and other local citizens? How much does the administrator encourage use of the library media center and information materials by students and teachers? How well do teachers carry out their instructional programs by incorporating these nontextbook resources and by helping students learn how to find and use information directly linked to class assignments? Questions such as these should be raised in the school of education review.

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A Nation at Risk delivered a sharply pointed challenge to Americans to revive the nation's approach to education. It will take brave and bold steps on many fronts to accomplish this objective.

One critical move proposed here would give the school library media center a full leadership presence in the redirected elementary and secondary school sectors. Today's school library media center has been set apart for too long from the main work of education by the traditions and outmoded priorities of our school systems. John Dewey first proposed that the school library be placed in the center of the school, not just for convenience, but also to dramatize the role of books and all learning materials in the teaching and learning process.

If it is to suit the era, the education of young children for a full and effective life must draw regular-

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ly on the learning resources of the library media center. From the earliest grades, students must be comfortable about capitalizing on its facilities. In the late 1980's and beyond, *every* adult will have to know how to manage more and more threads of information. The tools to begin perfecting that skill are to be found essentially in the school library media center.

On a broader plane, the school library media center and *all* libraries face a significant challenge now: providing the impetus, in their alliance with school and family, to create an enduring Learning Society in America. If this is to be realized, then all libraries must be updated and strengthened. The pages of the following chapter present recommendations to ensure that these changes come about.

Library Leadership in the Learning Society

To help lift formal schooling from mediocrity, to join in thrusting the Learning Society into secure orbit, to guide citizens through the morass of the Information Age, to earn their spurs as allies of teacher, family, and school, to make a national difference after being politely overlooked for so long—these are the tasks directly ahead for American libraries. Their work is cut out for them.

Would our country's education dilemma have been so intense if libraries had been more visible and competitive? The question is out of date. More to the point, dramatic steps are now called for, something not too characteristic of library performance over many decades.

Without question, librarians—those in public libraries, large and small, those at colleges and universities, those in schools, those in fast-growing facilities in business, industry, and the professions—must now take the initiative. They must reach more vigorously for their fair share of public attention and support; they must shake off invisibility and neutrality; they must be far more dynamic than is their custom. They must become stronger leaders.

This report recommends that the librarians of America undertake a series of important missions.

They need to take the lead in calling for an assessment of the nation's libraries. They should markedly expand the sharing of resources among their institutions. They need to improve the preparation of candidates for positions in the library and information science field.

At the same time, librarians ought to plan with community leaders for more effective support of education and lifelong learning. They need to transform libraries into user-oriented learning centers where adult literacy education will become or continue to be an important program option, where the very youngest children can be introduced to reading and learning, and where young adults can be guided into the world of great literature and into the habit of learning for a lifetime.

They must leave behind their relative isolation and develop more effective interactions with the communities of which they are a part. They need to give more time and effort to those skills, talents, and attitudes essential for such interactions.

They need to make the needs of library users known to the outside world—to government leaders in cities, to faculty in colleges and universities, to administrators in schools, to corporate leaders in industry, and to students now using their facilities—so that they will be involved in finding solutions. Librarians *cannot* do it alone.

To Improve Service To People

This report urges a dynamic, stronger role for all libraries. Keyed to this, they need to offer strong advisory services that are *user oriented*. This may mean creating such a service, or, if one already exists, it may have to be broadened and strengthened. How effective lifelong learning is in a library setting will depend on how knowledgeable, supportive, current, imagi-

native, and committed the librarians working directly with patrons are.

Libraries have evolved through more than a century of change in education. In 1870, 16,000 students graduated from high school. In the new century's first year, 95,000 students graduated. In late spring of 1984, 2.7 million received their high school diplomas.

Higher education is also changing. There was a time when the university educated mainly the elite. But in 1982, out of 136 million Americans 25 and older, 24 million had finished four or more years of college. Even so, education must keep changing, and at a rapid pace. Not only do we have a larger population to educate, but also our education needs are changing. We should have a greater amount of knowledge about more and more specialized areas. The storehouse of information open to us is incredible, made available through myriad computers and assorted high-speed telecommunications devices throughout the world.

How effective lifelong learning is in a library setting will depend directly on how knowledgeable, supportive, current, imaginative, and committed the librarians working directly with patrons are.

All this information is lost if we cannot put it to use. A nation with about 23 million citizens who cannot read well enough to decipher a job application form must be convinced that a Learning Society is a practical, attainable goal. Every individual *should* have the knowledge to understand complexities that were never imagined in the past.

This is where the library, allied with family and education, can come into its own. It has a golden chance to make a real difference. No other institution in the community is able to serve the Learning Society in quite the same way. No other has such cultural riches side by side with access to the myriad facts, figures, ideas, and impressions of the day. No other has a schedule quite so attractive, or an atmosphere quite so nonthreatening, for adults who want to pursue an issue to its source—and thus make a further investment in their own base of knowledge. No other can provide a learning uplift for *all* Americans: the 17 million under 5, the 45 million in kindergarten

through 12th grade, the 12 million in higher education, and the 158 million others beyond the usual years of formal schooling.

Who would think that libraries and librarians could be partners in this cause? In a present and future where information stress is assured, who would think that libraries and librarians, remembering their heritage and endowed with a keen sense of responsibility, could be otherwise?

Recommendation I

We recommend that libraries accept their central role in the Learning Society as [illegible] ters. Further, we recommend [illegible] staffed with user-oriented pr[illegible] only understand community [illegible] learning resources. These [illegible] would help patrons to gain th[illegible] skills to function successfully in [illegible] ciety.

With information resources and technology at the flood stage, the case for a strong advisory service in all libraries is one-sided in its favor.

With information resources and technology at the flood stage, the case for a strong advisory service in all libraries is one-sided in its favor. When an accomplished adviser can capitalize on links with libraries close by and throughout a region, all citizens, regardless of age, stand to benefit. And while technological devices cannot substitute adequately for human, "user friendly" services, they still lengthen the adviser's and the library's reach.

Against this background, in any library, regardless of type, there should be a versatile, resourceful advisory service:

- **Public Libraries** should have this service available for all ages. An adviser [illegible] of reading as well as lear[illegible] preschool children. Serv[illegible] schoolers are also import[illegible]

Book Industry Study Group findings, which confirm the conventional wisdom that parental attitudes are the major factor in determining a child's attitude toward books and reading. For children and young adults, there might be help to increase independent learning and to supplement the strengths of elementary and secondary school library media centers. Then, the adviser can be resourceful and supportive for adults, enabling some to enhance the quality of their life through learning pursuits, and assisting others who must be given special help because they have weak academic backgrounds or related problems.

- **School library** [illegible] basic learning [illegible] learning by the [illegible] work, motivate their uses of libraries for studying and for extracurricular activities, and encourage the lifetime habit of reading for pleasure and information. At the secondary school level, similar advice should continue—developing learning skills, helping with assignments, promoting the desire for independent learning, encouraging the ongoing use of libraries. The advisers should reach for ways to help teachers and administrators enrich instruction and to ease their access to professional resources.

- **College and university libraries** should be staffed with strong advisers to lead students toward advanced learning skills. They should provide subject-oriented bibliographic instruction so that students will master information skills for use both in formal academic pursuits and thereafter in the

Encouraging individuals to enter the realm of the Learning Society is a task for more than one type of library alone.

Encouraging individuals to enter the realm of the Learning Society is a task for more than one type of library alone. With their captive audiences, school library media centers have the best, most consistent opportunity to turn the introduction to independent learning into a lasting acquaintance. Elementary and secondary school library media centers should work hand in hand not only on teaching the use of information resources but also on stimulating an interest in reading and on providing learning incentives; as these programs progress, chances increase for cooperation with the public library. Actually, the secondary school library media [illegible]

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grams for preschoolers and their parents—stories, films, and games—to develop learning readiness and skills. With more and more women in the workforce, greater attention should be given to having programs for day care personnel. These programs could stress story-telling, reading aloud effectively, as well as other appropriate activities for that age group.

Older children's programming could include stories, films, reading guidance, and discussion groups. For young adults, the public library should build on its children's services, encouraging teenagers to try adult-level books. In this way, the institution would complement the secondary school by persuading younger people to become part of the Learning Society.

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person cannot read and write well enough to fill out the application and is one of our functionally illiterate citizens.

Inwardly embarrassed, unable to cope on their own, frustrated and discouraged, these individuals represent something else: an unparalleled opportunity for the libraries of the nation to show their worth and their leadership as learning institutions. In fact, moving aggressively into the national vacuum in adult literacy education may be the single biggest opportunity for libraries today. If they can build well on the good works of pioneer libraries in literacy education, they will have truly made a difference.

Recommendations

We recommend that libraries become involved in adult literacy education at the local, state, and national levels.

At the *local level*, if a coalition against illiteracy already exists, public and community college libraries in particular should become more actively involved. However, if no coalition has been set up, libraries should move into the lead on forming one. As members of a partnership, librarians need to decide what library resources are necessary to support the literacy program and then work out ways to make those resources available.

On the broader *state level*, the state library agency and any statewide library associations and organizations need actively to promote, support, and take part in the state coalition fighting illiteracy. As partners in that coalition, librarians should lead the effort to assess how libraries can support literacy education. They should also plan for integrating libraries in the statewide campaign.

agencies. Together, they should join and vigorously support projects aimed at eliminating illiteracy. In particular, they should seek assignments in the two most prominent national undertakings, the Coalition for Literacy and the National Adult Literacy Project. Librarians working at the national level should recommend what libraries can do to carry out literacy programs and then draft a countrywide plan of action.

To Strengthen Leadership Through Research and Assessment

The goal is to create an enduring Learning Society. Only by coalescing as they never have before will librarians carry out their share of the responsibility for this. And only by initially seeking answers to big questions can they generate the guidelines for their ascent to a new plane of leadership in America.

With all reasonable speed, librarians must retool their public presence, learn ways of active partnership, and ready themselves to lead their cohorts. On national, state, and local platforms, they must now stand up and be counted. New areas of cooperation and coordination must be found, developed, and secured; well-promoted planning should be started; comprehensive systems should be fashioned.

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Recommendation K

We recommend that the nation's school library media centers and public libraries be assessed for their ability to respond to the urgent proposals for excellence in education and lifelong learning. Further, we recommend that studies be conducted in such vital areas as:

- *defining information-seeking skills and behaviors;*
- *fostering adult literacy;*
- *promoting adult learning;*
- *defining training and retraining;*
- *developing a marketing strategy.*

A Nation at Risk issued a clarion call for excellence in education. Are the libraries of America able to do their part in the country's overall response? This issue is of such importance that, as the first step, an *assessment of the nation's libraries* should be commissioned. Past efforts are sorely outdated. New appraisals of performance and effectiveness should be made, and current resources—print, nonprint, human, and equipment—ought to be reevaluated. To get the attention of as many people as possible, prominent citizens and community leaders ought to be part of this review. Then, once each decade, the libraries should be revisited to see how well they have supported the Learning Society in the intervening time.

Because learning needs in communities are bound to change and increase, society should know more about the *information-seeking skills and behaviors* of children and adults. Information-users will certainly continue to want library services; perhaps these services ought to be revised to reflect how individuals go about their search for information. Actual use of the card or computer catalog is less of an issue than what strategies work best in the search. Meanwhile, another facet of this inquiry would look into why young adults stop using libraries. This line of questioning would follow up on the 1983 *Consumer Research Study on Reading and Book Purchasing*, conducted by the Book Industry Study Group, Inc. Its conclusion: there has been a most unfortunate decline in book reading in the 16-21 age group, from 75 percent in 1978 to 63 percent in 1983.

Another area of needed study involves what libraries can do to *foster adult literacy*. This is a

A Nation at Risk *issued a clarion call for excellence in education. Are the libraries of America able to do their part in the country's overall response? This issue is of such importance that, as the first step, an assessment of the nation's libraries should be commissioned.*

serious challenge because every citizen must be raised to a level of literacy if he or she is to succeed in the Information Age. While some states and municipalities have performed valiantly in this cause, no one community agency has taken over responsibility for it; secondary and postsecondary institutions sometimes hold that these adults are no longer their clientele.

There must be research on the best teaching strategies for literacy training, and successful techniques should be assessed with a special look at ones in which technology has been an effective aid.

All educational agencies in a community should join together to remedy the costly social and intellectual waste of illiteracy; the public and community college libraries need to be among them, cooperating to teach adults how to compute, cope, and survive by using newly acquired skills. But even as this activity goes on, there must be research on the best teaching strategies for literacy training, and successful techniques should be assessed with a special look at ones in which technology has been an effective aid.

The public library can also be of ongoing value as a place where *all* adults can learn. Regrettably, far too many citizens are unaware of this aspect of library service. Perhaps their ignorance stems from the voluntary nature of public library support; perhaps it occurs because so many adults never enter the library's door. Whatever the reason for this lack of awareness may be, the library is likely to be an even more plausible site for adult learning in years to come in light of the forecast that by the year 2000, two-thirds of our workforce will be in information-related jobs. With that prospect in the offing, *research on patterns of adult study and learning should be increased.*

To prepare library and information services for the new demands ahead, the library and information science community *must define the educational needs of librarians and information professionals.* All should know about the new technologies; some will specialize in helping people of different ages learn, while others will concentrate on helping adult patrons. As it now stands, too few libraries have personnel adequately schooled for these assignments.

Two-thirds of public libraries in towns of 10,000 or under average less than two full-time staff apiece; only 19 percent of them have the basic graduate degree in library science. The implication is clear: staff members of most small public libraries do not have enough training to aid the learning recommended in this report. How *should* librarians be educated in subject and service specializations to expedite our creation of the Learning Society? Researchers should help search for answers to this question.

The library is likely to be an even more plausible site for adult learning in years to come in light of the forecast that by the year 2000, two-thirds of our workforce will be in information-related jobs.

However, this endeavor will be of marginal value at best if adults in the community continue to be blissfully unaware of what their tax-supported public library can do for them. All too many studies say that very few American adults name the library as the place they would go for information. Do they have questions about education or social issues or housing or job choices? In each instance, most of them do not know that the library would have solid answers, or leads, or both. Ultimately, active participants in the Learning Society will *know* what to expect from the public library, but that day has not yet arrived. It is a false hope for librarians to rely on the comforting assumption that the public knows that information needed is in the public library.

To reverse this situation, *marketing strategies for all types of libraries have to be developed*. This may rub practitioners the wrong way, but with the great need for information among all citizens and with a formidable mission to accomplish, there is no alternative. Librarians must harness modern means to raise taxpayers' awareness of what school and public libraries can do for them and their families as unique community resources. For the facts are very clear: the public library is *not* being used fully to achieve the goals of a Learning Society.

All of these steps represent an earnest start at fighting illiteracy, promoting adult learning, and developing marketing strategies. The research pursuits recommended here, led by the assessment of the

nation's school and public libraries, will make the library community more cognizant of current realities. Armed with the results and benefiting from prototype programs in the field, librarians can move with much more assurance into the increasingly strenuous tug-of-war among many agencies for the support of the American people.

To Expand Linkages in Support of Lifelong Learning

Improving linkages, forming new ones, and settling all the inherent problems represent as big a challenge as library leadership now faces. How it responds will display how well the people of the library world take to being leaders at the forefront of the Information Age.

To the librarian, encouraging linkages and expanding networks are items of old business. Yet, they are as much a part of the library's future as the next generation of computers. Improving linkages, forming new ones, and settling all the inherent problems represent as big a challenge as library leadership now faces. How it responds will display how well the people of the library world take to being leaders at the forefront of the Information Age.

Existing, even decades-old, practices show the way: institutions joining with others to avoid wasteful duplications, reaching farther for interlibrary loans, and using technology more persistently to tap into the most likely of some 2,000 data bases publicly accessible in the country.

The long-range goal of such linkages should be to enhance learning at the library, thus brightening the prospects of achieving a Learning Society with the nation's libraries as the cornerstone of the network. Linkages should always reflect the needs of people and should be sensitive to decisions on the best ways to respond to those needs. This calls for planning on how to combine library and community resources to benefit all citizens.

Planners need to understand the different functions of libraries in their area. School library media centers, academic libraries, and special libraries have

distinct clienteles. In contrast, the public library works for *all* members of the community. Where it can, this library should support programs in the school library media centers and in the libraries of higher education institutions. At the same time, it needs to focus on the independent learner—most of the time an adult; it needs also to be ready to guide preschoolers into learning, while introducing young adults leaving school to the lifelong services available to them through the public library.

Committed to the broad goals of a nationwide Learning Society, libraries of all types still must concentrate on the needs of actual or potential clients. To program for them effectively, libraries must cooperate with other institutions in transcending boundaries and resource limitations.

Does a certain library seem to be self-sufficient? If so, chances are it disappoints its users more than the one which calls on other libraries for assistance. The latter will be the stronger in moving us closer to the Learning Society. The more effective library will be the one actively reaching outward, formulating linkages to help clients broaden and refine their base of knowledge with resources from many places, and assuming fully the responsibility for having the trained staff and learning resources appropriate to its mission; for, a chain of linkages is only as strong as the sum of the strengths of each link. The sharing of scarcity is not service-effective.

The more effective library will be the one actively reaching outward, formulating linkages to help clients broaden and refine their base of knowledge with resources from many places, and assuming fully the responsibility for having the trained staff and learning resources appropriate to its mission.

Recommendation L

We recommend that librarians at local, state, and national levels develop and implement plans to share the resources and services of their institution in support of education and lifelong learning. We also recommend that at the national level, leadership should be exerted to endorse, assist, and support the states and local communities in their efforts to share resources.

To carry out this recommendation, steps should be taken on three planes. *At the local level*, library community planning councils need to be formed; they should be made up of representatives of each type of local library, as well as representatives of local government, educational institutions, business, industry, and the public. Designing library linkages should be the council's main charge. It might consider listing the holdings of each library in the area, then making these lists available to the public. A further option: creating delivery systems which give residents access to all collections through direct, electronic interlibrary loan, or other means. The planning phase should draw to best advantage on the community's library and information resources. The deliberations need to recognize the formal and informal learning needs of children, young adults, and adults in that particular setting.

At the state level, support should be strengthened and sustained for state advisory councils to promote resource-sharing. Council members need to update and expand their plans and incentives for developing networks. This might call for permissive legislation, budgeting enough financial support, and training professionals and others in all facets of networking. These councils ought to involve people from state government, state education and library agencies, and different levels of education, business, and industry. They should step up efforts to give every state resident access to full library and information service. Taking a leadership position, these councils should strive to make the public aware of the vital place of libraries in filling their information needs and, more broadly, how libraries serve as community-wide educational assets. Along with their public awareness activities, the councils should conduct an ongoing advocacy campaign with the governor, legislature, state education agency, state library agency, and leaders of business, industry, and public and private higher education institutions.

At the national level, there should be cooperation in framing broad policies and plans to improve library and information services for all citizens. This step should engage the experience and judgment of men and women from Federal agencies, primary library and education associations, national libraries, relevant public utilities, and private-sector firms with an interest in sustaining sophisticated, service-oriented systems of libraries throughout America. Where effective coalitions already exist, they should be given ongoing encouragement and support. A strong call should come from the Federal government to states and localities, encouraging them to reevaluate their educational priorities and to consider new and better strategies for giving libraries a proper role in support of education and lifelong learning. Joining in this call might be the Congress, the governors, and national and professional organizations. At the national level, the library community should be an active participant in coalitions for lifelong learning.

Throughout these planning endeavors, there should be clear public recognition that libraries *already* serve as one distinctive source of individual lifelong learning for all Americans. Their goal: to help everyone develop their talents to the fullest. To reach this goal for all its clients, libraries should be prepared to change their programs as the needs in the community change.

As part of the planning process, certain lines of development should be considered, such as:

- Giving greater visibility and importance to children's and young adult services in the *public library*, and heightening young adult and adult improvement of learning through collection development, staff training, and cooperative programming with community organizations;
- Starting reading-stimulation and learning-incentive programs in the schools as a cooperative activity between *school library media center* staff and teachers should be given a high

priority. Arrangements should be made to carry them out within the school and with the public library;

- Making collections and staff resources of *academic and special libraries* available to all parts of the community to undergird formal and informal learning.

To Refine Education for Library and Information Science

In the modern library, linkages and networks are becoming more and more important; of them all, none is more vital than the link between librarian and client, because service is the heartbeat of library work.

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But while service is an inflexible given of their trade, librarians must be flexible and bend with the times. Nothing suggests that more than an evolution in titles. In 1970 only five library schools incorporated the words "Information Science" in their title; by 1984, of the 59 ALA-accredited American library schools, 38 had introduced the term "information science," "information studies," or "information management" in their titles, while 21 retained their previous names. The change has broadened the horizon for both school and student; options have increased on both sides as courses have been generated on automated systems, information technology, data base uses, networking, and media. Pressures on the schools in these times of technology and inundations of information have been powerful. To a great extent educators have adapted.

However, another reality has gripped them: in a few short years, the market for librarians has gone stale. Highly vulnerable to budget-cutters, the library has lost some of its children's specialists and storytellers; throughout the nation, elementary school library media professionals have been furloughed.

Reading the handwriting on the wall, undergraduates have veered off in other directions. From 8,000 in 1970, the number of graduates from all library schools fell to 5,000 in 1982. That spectacle has not gone unnoticed by higher education: two accredited graduate programs for educating librarians folded in 1983, and three others determined this year not to take any more new students.

The irony is that this reduction comes at a time when the information management field is burgeoning as never before. The special libraries in business, industry, and the professions continue to prosper. Librarians with particular academic specialties—most notably in the sciences and mathematics—are in extremely short supply. California cannot get enough minority candidates for cities like Los Angeles where more than half the population is minority. Meanwhile, librarians need updating, much like the electrical and computer engineers who have to refurbish their know-how within five years after graduation. The more dependent they become on technology, the more librarians also need professional reeducating.

A nation gearing up for a Learning Society must have mechanisms for training women and men in the new as well as the old art and science of information handling and use.

Hence, schools of library and information science continue to have a strong reason for being, as long as they have antennae well-tuned to pick up signals of change. Of the 57 courses offered in a long-established library education program in the Northeast, 15 deal with technology and information management, areas that only a few years ago would have been quite alien to a graduate school's catalog.

A nation gearing up for a Learning Society must have mechanisms for training women and men in the new as well as the old art and science of information handling and use. The graduate programs stand as a national resource in this time of urgency. The library community has the obligation not only to campaign for keeping those institutions alive, but also to apply its full strength to recruiting the best and brightest neophytes into this career avenue.

Recommendation M

We recommend that library and information science educators reform and refine the recruitment, preparation, and continuing education of librarians and information scientists. Further, we recommend that the entire library community hold higher education responsible for providing high-quality education to equip professionals with special competencies to work effectively in libraries and information centers in the Learning Society.

If these recommendations are to be converted into realities, library educators will have to undertake well-defined tasks. They must enliven their recruiting, reshape curriculum, and raise to a new level of professionalism the continuing education of their peers in the field. In each of these phases, they will be displaying the more vigorous leadership that is vital for librarians of the 1980's.

An active step-up of recruitment should be preceded by some questioning. Do we need to define more clearly just what professional librarians do? What are the hallmarks of the successful practitioner? What facets of the profession appeal the most to those individuals? Library and information science educators could also benefit from throwing out lines to all types of libraries. Perhaps nonprofessionals or even users in those institutions would make strong candidates. Perhaps recruiters could focus as well on individuals with special academic backgrounds such as science, mathematics, and foreign languages.

To heighten the appeal for candidates, the schools need to revamp times and sites of programs to make them more convenient. At the same time, recruitment might be buttressed by aggressive marketing to present the image of the profession in a new light.

Along with more lively recruiting, library educators need to concentrate on curriculum improvement. To aid in this process, they should draw on the

expertise of faculty leaders in allied disciplines, as well as on the experience of library practitioners; these individuals might then be invited to teach new courses on their respective specialties.

Leadership in library and information science education has pinpointed areas on which larger emphasis might be placed. For candidates who want to work in school library media centers, learning theory and child development should be offered. Or the school of library and information science should arrange to have students take these courses in another school on the campus.

Political awareness and organizational structures need to be taught. Experience underscores that librarians ought to know more about how political systems work. At the same time, the improved curriculum should include modern marketing principles and how to use them for the library's good. Far more than just a gimmick, imaginative marketing and good public relations may well be the library's best lifeline to a stable future.

Along with these course changes, the candidate needs to have ways to learn on the job and access to field internships. There should also be opportunities to specialize in such library career areas as work with children and young people, literacy, business, and communications.

Once the student has become a practitioner at work, the need for education may change character, but it does not end. *Continuing professional development* is more of an obligation in librarianship than ever before. Everyone in the library community—librarians, their employers, their graduate schools, funding agencies, membership organizations—should accept the precept that professional development is a continuing responsibility shared by them all. Every library and library system should budget annually to cover continuing education costs for professionals and other staff.

On a parallel track, library and information science faculty members need to be enhancing their growth. At intervals they should sharpen their skills by working in libraries. Then, to keep abreast of issues and trends affecting the profession, these men and women should gain experience in related job fields, perhaps through stepped-up programs of research, consulting, or exchange.

An Afterword For All Citizens

Libraries remain the meccas of self-help, the most open of open universities . . . where there are no entrance examinations and no diplomas, and where one can enter at any age.

Daniel J. Boorstin,
Librarian of Congress

The recommendations of this report aim to foster the view that American libraries are congenial homes of ideas, homes to be enjoyed, valued, and used regularly by all Americans as they participate in the Learning Society. They may have to be redesigned to suit a new era, but the warmth, the concern, the help, the wealth of information remembered from previous visits still remain.

As citizens of the world's longest-lasting democracy, we must have easy access to libraries more than ever before. How well we govern, how intelligently we think through one difficult issue after another, how rationally we perform at center stage on the planet, will depend on our taking advantage of that resource.

Throughout our lives, the richest gold mines, the ones offering us the best chance to pan for the facts that yield knowledge, are libraries. Knowledge gained

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there can convert bias into understanding, and understanding into wisdom.

For decades, libraries have graced different sites in our town. But many of us have never bothered to pay attention to them. The public library, the school library media center, the academic and special libraries—all too often they are unknown quantities to us.

The time has come to change all that. Too much critical information is reverberating through our lives for us to continue ignoring those institutions. If they had to be shut for lack of support, we could wind up paying a fee to access a commercial data base through our home computer or searching for alternative sources of information, which would most likely be much more costly or inconvenient. Many of us probably could not afford that. As a result, the ideal of a democracy of ideas would evaporate, and information illiteracy would soar.

Fortunately, we do not have to design and build a new home for ideas from the ground up. It's already there. Libraries may need better furnishings, or more highly trained staff, or enhanced resources, or stronger links with neighbors, but the house stands.

That is where the child goes to learn how to make a Chinese kite. A student goes there to appeal for help on understanding Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, to know about the modulus of elasticity and the minimum tensile strength of 1040 steel. An adult asks for a clearer insight on the Child Care Foods Program; another inquires about the total amount spent by NASA since its inception.

For the curious, for those with active and inquiring minds, libraries are a most welcome home. We have no institutions that are more likely components of a Learning Society spanning all our years; without them, a full Learning Society simply could not be realized. If communities were without libraries, the alternatives would be illogical, inadequate, and downright alarming.

Our nation should use the institutions it has. It should insist that our libraries—academic and public, school library media centers and special—become full partners in a dynamic Learning Society. Given that happy change, the excellence of education in America can become a sound promise, rather than a forlorn dream.

The recommendations and strategies set forth in this report are intended to bring the American library into that vital partnership. It stands as a framework on which the community itself must now build. In the long run, it will be up to dedicated artisans in national, state, and local positions to turn this framework into a new structure. Their ideas, their approaches, their strategies, blended in common effort, will construct a home to endure in the Information Age.

Appendices

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Dr. Richard M. Dougherty Director, University Libraries University of Michigan	"Stemming the Tide" of Mediocrity: The Academic Library Response
Dr. Jane A. Hannigan Professor, School of Library Service Columbia University	Vision to Purpose to Power: A Quest for Excellence in the Education of Library and Information Science Professionals
Dr. James W. Liesener Professor College of Library and Information Services University of Maryland	Learning at Risk: School Library Media Programs in an Information World
Dr. Peggy Sullivan Dean College of Professional Studies Northern Illinois University	Libraries and the Learning Society: Relationships and Linkages among Libraries
Dr. Douglas L. Zweizig Assistant Professor Library School University of Wisconsin—Madison	Public Libraries and Excellence: The Public Library Response to *A Nation at Risk*

Public Library Seminar
Boston Public Library
Boston, Massachusetts
January 31–February 1, 1984

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Edward G. Holley, Dean, School of Library Science, University of North Carolina, Moderator

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Academic Library Seminar
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois
February 6–February 7, 1984

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Library and Information Science Education Seminar
University of California–Berkeley
Berkeley, California
February 8–February 9, 1984

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Seminar on Linkages and Relationships
among Libraries
Dupont Plaza Hotel
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March 27, 1984

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School Library Media Seminar
Dallas Independent School District
Dallas, Texas
February 13–February 14, 1984

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